

**From:** Joan Schafer/R3/USEPA/US  
**Sent:** 12/4/2011 1:21:22 PM

**To:** Ron Borsellino; Michael DAndrea  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** AP article About Dimock

## FYI

I checked voice mail on Friday evening -- trish left me a message saying she did an interview with an AP reporter re Dimock sometime on Friday; not sure if she let anyone know about it. I left her a voice message reply asking her to make sure she let Mike D. know about it. Found this article today in NY Times...I think it came out yesterday. joan

### Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The mayor of Binghamton, N.Y., has offered to send a tanker with fresh water to a northeastern Pennsylvania village where about a dozen households were left scrambling this week after a gas driller blamed for polluting the aquifer three years ago stopped making daily deliveries.

But in a sign of the controversy swirling around Dimock Township, members of the township board of supervisors told Binghamton Mayor Matthew Ryan they were not ready to sign a mutual aid agreement and allow the city's tanker in. Township residents are deeply split over drilling, and many cast doubt on the extent and severity of the contamination of private water wells.

"We had the truck ready to go," said Ryan, a former environmental lawyer.

None of the three supervisors returned messages from The Associated Press on Friday.

Houston-based Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. ended delivery of bulk and bottled water to 11 families in Dimock on Wednesday, leaving residents to find alternate sources. Anti-drilling activists have put out a call for volunteers with tanker trucks to deliver bulk water to the residents.

Cabot asserts the residents' well water is safe to drink and won permission from state environmental regulators last month to stop paying for water for them.

The Environmental Protection Agency said Friday that water sampling data provided by some residents failed to show contaminant levels that would trigger emergency action under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

"While we are continuing our review, to date, the data does not indicate that the well water presents an immediate health threat to users," Trish Taylor, who works in the agency's hazardous site cleanup division in Philadelphia, said in an email to some of the residents.

Cabot and industry groups touted the email, which the agency released on Friday, as proof that Dimock's water is clean. But Taylor said in an interview that the EPA is not giving Dimock a clean bill of health.

"It's not a blanket statement at all," she said. "We don't have years of data. We have a very finite amount of data that was provided to us by these residents and by (the state Department of Environmental Protection). It's not a broad statement at all about sampling results."

State regulators previously determined that Cabot drilled faulty gas wells that allowed methane to escape into Dimock's aquifer. The company denied responsibility, but has been banned from drilling in a 9-square-mile area of Dimock since April 2010.

Resident Victoria Switzer said other testing has proven that methane and hazardous chemicals used in the drilling process have tainted Dimock's water.

"There are chemicals in the water, chemicals that are not naturally occurring and should not be in the water," she said Friday.

Mayor Ryan said his city stands ready to help, if Dimock Township accepts it.

The mutual aid agreement that he asked the township supervisors to sign says, in part: "As Dimock Township does not have the capability of providing water for the eleven families on Carter Road, whose shipments of water were suspended as of today, we are requesting any community or organization capable of providing water for these residents to come to their aid."

The supervisors initially expressed an interest, Ryan said, but "we had a feeling that the longer it lasted, certain forces might get to them and change their mind."

Bill Aileo, an attorney who helped organize Enough Already, a group of pro-drilling residents and businesses in and around Dimock, denounced Ryan's offer as a political stunt.

He said the residents could have accepted a December 2010 settlement agreement between Cabot and Pennsylvania environmental officials, under which the energy company agreed to pay the residents twice the tax value of their homes and install whole-house treatment systems. A half-dozen residents accepted the offer, but 11 households that are suing Cabot in federal court are appealing the settlement, calling the treatment systems inadequate.

"This is part of an agenda to oppose any development of natural gas, and the 'ka-ching' factor for the (Dimock residents)," Aileo said. "It can be portrayed as this magnanimous action by the mayor of Binghamton, but believe that and I will sell you a bridge in Brooklyn."

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Communications Coordinator  
Hazardous Site Cleanup Division  
USEPA - Region 3  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Phone: (215) 814-5143  
Fax: (215) 814-3001  
e-mail: [schafer.joan@epa.gov](mailto:schafer.joan@epa.gov)